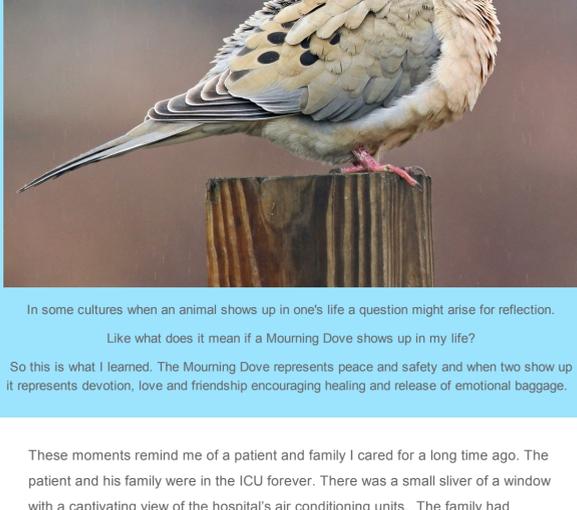




## Community Nest

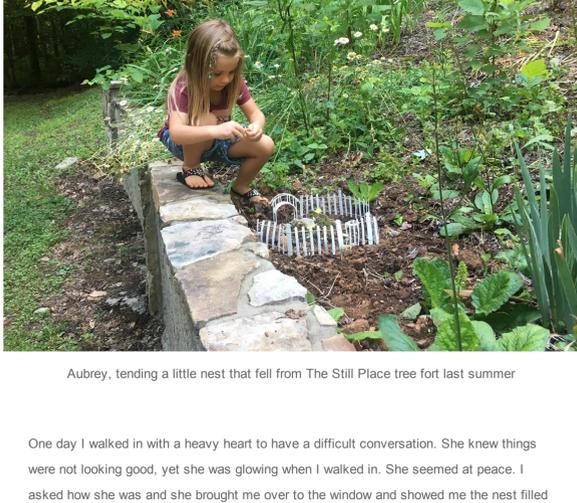
I've noticed for the past three springs two mourning doves hang out in my flower basket on my deck in Hendersonville. I hear them cooing when I come in from my work at the hospital. Sometimes I sit there for a while and watch them.



In some cultures when an animal shows up in one's life a question might arise for reflection. Like what does it mean if a Mourning Dove shows up in my life?

So this is what I learned. The Mourning Dove represents peace and safety and when two show up it represents devotion, love and friendship encouraging healing and release of emotional baggage.

These moments remind me of a patient and family I cared for a long time ago. The patient and his family were in the ICU forever. There was a small sliver of a window with a captivating view of the hospital's air conditioning units. The family had created a loving nest of their own by the window. I remember the lounge neatly laid out with a quilt from home, all tidy for morning rounds, a journal and a bible lying at the foot of the bed. One day I walked over to the space to be near the patient's wife as my entourage of residents and interns were presenting her husband's case on morning rounds. After we were done, she said, "Can I show you something Dr. G?" I said sure. She brought me over to her window and showed me a nest. She said when her husband first became ill the doves would come and go building the nest together. They laid the eggs and then she said, "the coolest thing happens. Every morning the dad comes in and the mom leaves for a pretty long time. She comes back then he leaves. They take care of the eggs together in their tiny nest." She hoped that by the time the eggs hatched her husband would be better and not needing the constant blood transfusions he was requiring. Daily her husband worsened instead of improved.



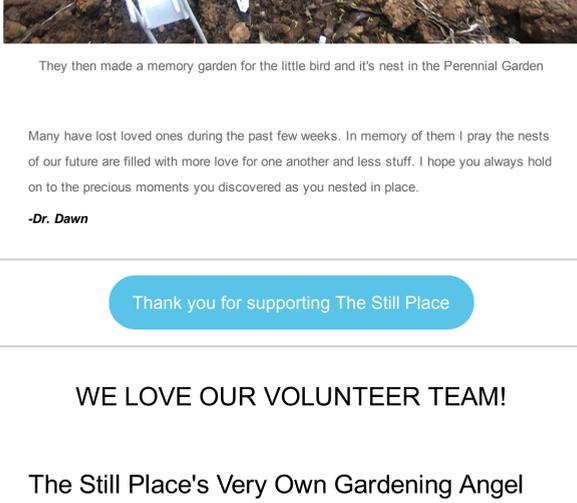
Aubrey, tending a little nest that fell from The Still Place tree fort last summer

One day I walked in with a heavy heart to have a difficult conversation. She knew things were not looking good, yet she was glowing when I walked in. She seemed at peace. I asked how she was and she brought me over to the window and showed me the nest filled with little gaping mouths as they were being fed by the mom with the proud papa looking on. She said to me, "It is time for my husband to be better. He has worked so hard with me, building our nest, taking care of our parents, raising our children. It is time for him to fly home and start building our new nest."



The nest held a baby bird. The family held a funeral for the bird.

We as a nation and actually as a world have been "sheltering in place" for weeks now with uncertainty of what lies ahead, hoping things will get better. Remembering this family and their nest, I wonder how our perspective might change if we thought of this as "nesting in place" for a while instead of "sheltering in place." When a family nests before their child is born they are filled with hope and anticipation of a new adventure in life. This anticipation will last for the remainder of their days on earth. Together there will be adventures in joy, some in sorrow but always in hope and with love. In these unprecedented times before the bustle reasserts itself I pray you look around at the nest you have created in the past few weeks, the new discoveries of yourself, and your loved ones. Remember that our hopes are fluid and what we hope for in the beginning is not always what we hope for in the end.



They then made a memory garden for the little bird and it's nest in the Perennial Garden

Many have lost loved ones during the past few weeks. In memory of them I pray the nests of our future are filled with more love for one another and less stuff. I hope you always hold on to the precious moments you discovered as you nested in place.

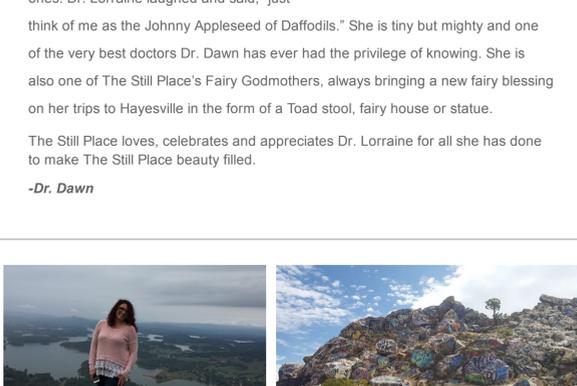
-Dr. Dawn

Thank you for supporting The Still Place

## WE LOVE OUR VOLUNTEER TEAM!

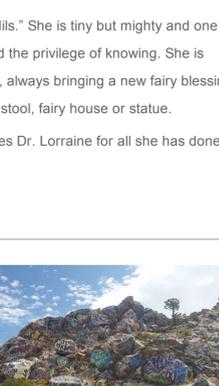
### The Still Place's Very Own Gardening Angel

Dr. Lorraine Neilsen was one of our very first The Still Place Volunteers. Dr. Dawn met Dr. Lorraine five years ago when she started working at Pardee Hospital in Hendersonville, North Carolina. She listened to Dr. Dawn talk about The Still Place which was still more of a dream than a reality. On Christmas Eve, Dr. Dawn walked out to her car and found the entire back of her Jeep filled with toys, a basket of ready to make dinners with some amazing homemade Spaghetti sauce, and gifts wrapped for the mommy and daddy who were to arrive at The Still Place the day after Christmas.



Doctor Lorraine

The next fall, Lorraine and Dr. Gail Clary brought a rental van filled with thousands of plants to develop a perennial garden in the front yard of The Still Place transforming it from a sad old dead tree weedy nastiness into the beautiful blooming oasis we enjoy today. Each fall since Dr. Lorraine has come with a 1000 daffodils which she and Dr. Dawn and our families plant in the cold October rain. This past fall we were digging up last years planting while finding room for the new ones. Dr. Lorraine laughed and said, "just think of me as the Johnny Appleseed of Daffodils." She is tiny but mighty and one of the very best doctors Dr. Dawn has ever had the privilege of knowing. She is also one of The Still Place's Fairy Godmothers, always bringing a new fairy blessing on her trips to Hayesville in the form of a Toad stool, fairy house or statue.



The Still Place loves, celebrates and appreciates Dr. Lorraine for all she has done to make The Still Place beauty filled.

-Dr. Dawn



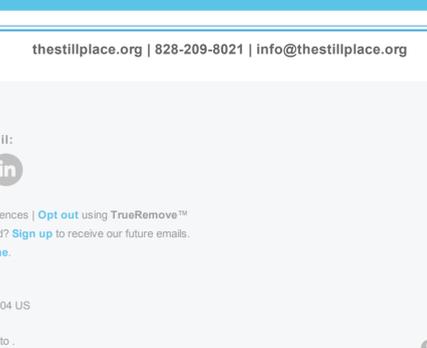
## Series: Our Excursion Partners

It's no secret that we are surrounded by endless beauty in our little mountain town. No matter where you go, it's like a priceless painting upon turn. One of our favorite spots to show off this beauty is at Bell Mountain in Hiwassee, Georgia.

Though the steep, narrow drive to reach the top can be quite frightening for some, the views are certainly well worth it. When you reach the top, you can see clear across the mountains and the lake for miles. On most days you can even see Georgia, North Carolina, and Tennessee at once.

A very unique aspect of Bell Mountain is the graffiti that fills the piles and piles of rock. As people visit, they leave a spray paint piece behind. Most of the time it's their name. Other times it's pieces of art: flowers, flags, quotes, crosses.

If you're a sunset chaser, this is the spot for you! When the colors of the sky mix with the mountain tops, it's sure to take your breath away.

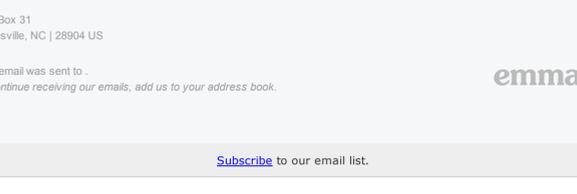


The awe and power of nature is something we love to explore at The Still Place. There's something about it that sends a presence of calm and hope through your body. There is just so much to be grateful for when you look at nature. The way the trees dance with the wind and the music of chirping birds. The way the sun glistens off everything in its path and the colors that are so vivid and bright. It can all only be described as simply amazing.

When times are tough and you feel like everything is so dark, emerge yourself in nature. Take in the beauty of the earth that was crafted so perfect. There is always hope that surrounds you!

By Kayla

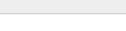
## "The Still Place LIVE"



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